

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY
REMARKS TO REPORTERS EN ROUTE TO MUNICH, GERMANY
FEBRUARY 4, 1994

Let me start off by observing there's been almost exactly 24 hours since I was sworn into this job. So this is the first day anniversary. I thought it might be interesting to just cover briefly what I've done during this 24 hours, and then we can go on to any Q & A that you have on it.

It started off right off the bat, after getting sworn in last night, by my going out and buying a new suit for the formal swearing-in ceremony in two weeks from today. So that's a crucial bit of information; I bought a new suit right off the bat.

Q. Is it a dark suit or light?

A. Dark blue, you bet. I learned my lesson well.

Q. Where did you buy it?

A. Nordstroms.

PRESS COMMENT: Pentagon City Nordstroms.

SECRETARY PERRY -- First thing in the morning, breakfast meeting with Jack Murtha. Subject: supplemental appropriations and other budget questions. Also, I had later in the day a meeting with Senator Conrad, North Dakota. Meeting subject was the nuclear posture review which is sort of a third of the way through right now. He's very interested in that, both for strategic reasons and the fact that there are some very important nuclear bases in his state.

I had three very interesting meetings dealing with various policy issues. A long discussion with Shali relative to doing some planning and discussion about future operations in Bosnia.

Also, reviewing, and signing, the three different deployment orders involved. (NOTE: Not related to Bosnia. As noted later, they dealt with routine deployments.)

We had a principals' meeting today at the White House on the subject of Haiti. That was a very interesting and a very pertinent discussion, and I had a separate discussion with Sandi Berger on still yet another issue of concern to us.

Of course, in some ways, the highlight and the most emotional part of the day was the farewell ceremony for Secretary Aspin. This I thought was -- I don't know how many of you attended that -- but it had a really good feeling to it. It was like a military change of command ceremony. The feeling of the civilian respect -- the military respect for the

civilian leadership in both directions, both the outgoing and the incoming was really palpable. It's sort of what we're all about at the Pentagon, working the bonding on that military/civilian team.

Then I hopped on the airplane to come out to this Wehrkunde meeting.

It's unusual that 24 hours after you're sworn into your job you go on an overseas trip, and of course, I didn't plan it that way. But I also never seriously considered postponing or dropping out of this trip. This is to me a very important meeting. Not because the Wehrkunde itself is so important, although it is a very significant meeting, but because NATO is so important. It remains the most powerful and the most important military alliance the United States has. I will have the opportunity, not only to express at this meeting - to give an important policy statement on the future of NATO which is going to take off on the Partnership for Peace.

Now let me back off on that. Without giving you the talk, just say that the key issue on my mind is that we have developed what I think is a major new thrust for NATO in the Partnership for Peace. It does two very important related things. First of all, I believe it puts the United States back in a position of leadership in NATO, as well as asserting the primacy of NATO to the United States defense planning. Secondly, —it provided — the President's summit meeting in Brussels basically laid out the architecture for this new plan. This was, I believe, a great success.

My purpose on this trip is, now that the architecture is set, to start the building, brick by brick. We want to get all of our NATO partners, and some of the countries just about to join the Partnership for Peace, to start concrete actions to get this partnership actually launched. So that's a very important part of the trip. A closely related part of the trip, since the Partnership for Peace has NATO looking to the East, a very important part of this trip, in particular is how we look to Russia, since Russia is unquestionably the largest and most significant nation in the East. The Partnership for Peace will depend on how well we can develop that ongoing partnership with Russia.

I refer also back to the President's summit meeting in Moscow which followed hard on the heels of his summit meeting in Brussels. At the Moscow meeting, he was looking specifically and directly toward the ongoing U.S. and NATO relationship with Russia. Probably the highlight of that summit meeting was the trilateral nuclear agreement with Russia, the United States, and Ukraine. You have, I'm sure, read the reports today that Ukraine has made a major step forward — I might say, over a lot of skepticism of some people that they were going to do that. The Rada, the parliament in Ukraine today did endorse the trilateral nuclear agreement and, at the same time, agreed on the implementation of the START II Treaty. So we think this is a red letter day. I do not suggest to you that we'll not have any more issues or any more problems with nuclear matters with Ukraine and Russia, but this was a very important development. And, while I've talked about the nuclear issues as different from Partnership for Peace, I will stress in my talk that I'm going to give on Sunday the close interconnection between those two issues. This architecture in the Partnership for Peace is what causes the Russians and the

Ukrainians to see a basis for a long term security relationship with both the United States and the NATO nations and makes them feel comfortable in going ahead with denuclearization moves. So it's all a part of a broad security package.

I plan also in my meetings in Munich to have bilateral meetings with some of the defense ministers. These are ministers that I already know and I've already met at other meetings, but it will be my first meeting with them as Secretary of Defense.

On the way back from Munich, I have to get back to the real world a little bit because we have two very important budget meetings on Monday and Tuesday. We are launching the '95 budget on Monday, as you know, and I expect to see most of you at that meeting. And then we'll be having our first congressional testimony on Tuesday with the Senate Armed Services Committee. This is sort of, according to my schedule, compressing things much more than I would like them to be compressed and that's why Alice Maroni is here on this trip with me. She's not here as my local expert on the Germans or the Russians or the Partnership for Peace. She's here because on the trip back from Germany, when we have this nine or ten hour plane ride, she and I are going to be working most of the time preparing for the budget meetings which are going to occur the next day. It's not that I haven't spent a lot of time with the budget already, because I've spent many many hours on the preparation of the budget, but I have never presented the whole budget to the Congress or to the press. That's what Alice and I are going to be working on -- the very important details of how we conduct those two meetings.

So it's been a very busy 24 hours. It's going to be a very busy weekend, and when we get back, it's going to be a very busy next week. It's getting -- from my point of view, it's getting launched in this job with a lot of energy and a lot of momentous actions occurring right away -- budget actions, policy actions, Congressional actions, alliance actions. Everything is all wrapped up in these first three or four days. That's what I wanted to tell you. I'm open to questions.

Q. Mr. Secretary, you said something interesting. I quote your words earlier. You said you thought the Partnership for Peace had put the United States back in the position of leadership in NATO. Could you tell me what threatened that leadership and why the United States...

A. What threatened the leadership was more fundamental than that, it was what threatened the very direction of NATO with the removal of the reason that NATO was formed which is a military alliance to stand up against the military threat from the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. With the removal of that threat, there was no clear guidance, there was no clear direction for NATO. So NATO, in my view, was drifting for the last couple of years and somehow the direction, the compass for NATO had to be reset. The Partnership for Peace, I believe, does that. The fact that it was a United States proposal and United States action taking the leadership in presenting this new direction and that there was an almost unanimous enthusiastic endorsement of that, meant that we are now back in the leadership position of NATO.

Q. Would you say that your policy speech this weekend will add a new initiative to the Partnership for Peace?

A. No. To put the Partnership for Peace in perspective, it will call for vigorous concrete actions by NATO to implement and implement it soon. We've already had four nations sign up for the Partnership for Peace and we expect another dozen to sign up for it in the weeks ahead. So we want to get moving with it. That means planning exercises. That means setting up facilities in Mons so that when a nation signs up for it they will come and have a place to sit and activities to engage in. It means beginning the training exercises. Getting all those activities actually underway. It's going to be a very important part of our activity.

Q. Do you have a sense that people are being a little shy about it? Is that why you say they don't get fired up?

A. I'm sorry. It's not a question of getting them enthusiastic, it's a question of laying out a plan of action and getting people to sign up and commit so each nation knows what they're going to be doing and we get on with it. So it's one thing to agree in principle, and it's another thing to do it. Now we have to get on with doing it.

Q. Where does Bosnia (fall) in terms of derailing this unity and this vista of leadership at this point?

A. I don't see Bosnia as a threat.

Q. That is the concern over Bosnia to be a threat to the coherence of NATO or to this leadership position?

A. Bosnia is a very important problem in and of itself, and we have, as you are well aware, a diverse set of views within NATO on how to deal with Bosnia. I do not see those views as being -- that diversity, as threatening the coherence of NATO in any sense.

Q. Let me just follow up on that, if you don't mind? Is there any evolution that you're going to present or that you can share with us in the administration's view on Bosnia which seems to be this weekend?

A. I don't plan to include a discussion of Bosnia in my talk. I have no doubt -- I don't want to be duplicitous about this -- I will be discussing Bosnia in my bilateral meetings. I also have meetings scheduled with Admiral Boorda and General Joulwan. Clearly I'll be discussing Bosnia with them.

Q. You said earlier, sir, that you would be discussing in these bilateral meetings future operations in Bosnia?

A. What I meant to say is that if I have a bilateral meeting with the German defense minister, it is clear that the subject of Bosnia will come up. That's one of the items that

he'll want to discuss and I'll want to discuss. I didn't mean to suggest that that's the reason for the bilateral. I'm just confident that that will be one of the items of discussion.

Q. You're meeting with the Germans and the Brits, anybody else? And if not, why not?

A. Also with United States General Joulwan and Admiral Boorda. Because there's not enough time is the simplest possible reason. I have two alternatives in the limited amount of time we have over there. First, the alternative of extending the trip a day or two which was my original plan that went out the window when I realized I had to be back to present the budget. So that wasn't an option. So I had to say within the time there are two options. One of them is schedule bilateral meetings all during the Wehrkunde meetings and disrupt the overall meeting. I didn't feel it was right to do that.

PRESS COMMENT: Secretary Aspin did last year.

A. He got some criticism for that, too.

Q. Do we tolerate the build-up of Serb and/ or Croatian regular forces in Bosnia again?

A. I'm going to pass at this time on a substantive discussion of Bosnia. Maybe on the way back on the airplane after I will have discussed this with Admiral Boorda and General Joulwan. The main reason to pass on this now is that I don't want to give a 30-second discussion on Bosnia. It's too big and too important. We'll take some time to discuss it more closely on the way back.

Q. You said you signed three deployment orders before you left? What were they?

A. I can't discuss deployment orders. They were classified. I don't want to dramatize. There was nothing -- they were relatively routine deployment schedules -- no news items.

Q. Can you talk about what happened at the principals' meeting on Haiti?

A. No, I can't.

Q. Was there some action taken? Was this more of an update discussion of what the status is there?

A. Yes, there was some action taken but I can't discuss it.

— END —